

VTDDC Grant Award Policy

VTDDC achieves its Mission and federal mandate through development of projects designed to achieve the goals and objectives of its Five Year State Plan.

Members determine which projects will be accomplished through grants; the amount to be awarded; and how many years the project may be funded.** Each year members review the projects, and vote on renewing grants based on performance and/or adding new projects, and set awards based on VTDDC's budget.

Funding may be awarded by members through a grant competition or sole source invitation.

1. Competitive Awards:

VTDDC is committed to outreach efforts to ensure that applications for funding represent diversity.

Most grants are expected to be awarded through a competitive grant process that includes:

- Development of Requests for Proposal [RFP] that include evaluation criteria. **
- Widespread distribution of the RFP with timelines.
- User-friendly instructions & application.
- Member review of applications using evaluation criteria.
- Discussion of member recommendations and vote to award funds.

2. Sole Source Awards:

Following State of Vermont guidelines, there may be situations when only one person or organization offers the specialized expertise, capacity and/or experience essential to a project. Under those circumstances an award can be made **sole source**, without a Request for Proposal. The same process will be followed for review and voting to award funds unless the membership affirmatively votes to adopt a different process. Any grantee receiving sole source grants will be expected to comply with all VTDDC requirements, including submission of an application.

Unsolicited Proposals:

When a proposal is received that is not in response to an RFP or sole source invitation, it will be reviewed by staff and presented to the Executive

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Committee for consideration based on its fit with the current State Plan goals, objectives and budget. The Executive Committee will decide next steps, including whether to invite an application or consider development of a new project category to present to the membership for consideration.

** The exception is small grants awarded per the Executive Committee Fund Policy.

Adopted March 26, 2009

Grant Award Criteria & Process

Members are active participants and decision-makers in VTDDC's grant award process. Members participate in Workgroups to develop grant project categories, to review applications, and to monitor projects after awards are made.

Steps in the Awards process:

1. All grant applications are first reviewed by the Executive Committee.
2. Application Review Workgroups are formed, led by Executive Committee. Every effort will be made to have the same Workgroup follow a project through the entire process, from developing grant projects to monitoring grant work. However, at times members will need to change due to changing grant project categories, and also conflicts of interest.

The Executive Committee may choose to present recommendations directly to the membership to fund applications, without Workgroup review, when it determines there is no competition. An example would be when there are one or two applications that total the funding set-aside for a project, and the application(s) match the evaluation criteria.

3. In doing their review, at a minimum members will consider:
 - How well the Project fits VTDDC's Mission, the Request For Proposal, and the State Plan.
 - Clarity of its Goal, and the plan and activity steps to reach it.
 - Meaningful participation of people with developmental disabilities.
 - Measurable products and/or outcomes and a way to evaluate.
 - Coordination/collaboration with other organizations.
 - Cost-effective budget with expenses that relate to project activities.
 - Demonstration of applicant's commitment to the Project, knowledge and experience to carry it out.
 - Potential for systems change and continuation when funding ends.
4. Workgroups will make recommendations to the full Membership about which applications to fund, and for what amount.
5. The full membership votes on awards unless members vote to adopt a different process for a specific type of award. An example is the Executive Committee Fund.

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